

REMARKS
UPON A ^{535.d. 20}
BOOK,
ENTITLED,
A Philosophical Enquiry
Concerning
Human Liberty.

By SAMUEL CLARKE, D.D. Rector
of St. James's Westminster.

L O N D O N :

Printed, for JAMES KNAPTON, at
the Crown in St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1717.

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*R E M A R K S upon a Book,
entituled, A Philosophical In-
quiry concerning Humane
Liberty.*

S I N C E the greater part of the fore-
going Papers were printed off, there
has been published a Book entituled,
*A Philosophical Inquiry concerning Hu-
man Liberty* : In which the Author
proposes *Six* distinct Arguments, to prove that
there neither *is*, nor *can be*, any *Liberty* in
Human Actions. The Arguments he offers,
have (I think) been already in great mea-
sure obviated in the fore-going Papers. Yet
because some of them seem to be placed in
such a *Light*, as may possibly deceive un-
wary Persons, whose Thoughts have not been
much conversant upon so nice a Subject ;
I thought it not improper, upon this Occa-
sion, to set down such *Brief Remarks*, as
might be sufficient to lay open to an intel-
ligent Reader the Fallacy of the whole
Book.

In the *First* place, I observe; the Author lays great stress upon the necessity of Mens forming to themselves *clear Ideas*, and expressing those Ideas in *clear Words*.

* Pag. 2. " *There is No Question* (says * he) *in the*
 " *whole compass of Speculation, of which*
 " *Men have written more obscurely, and of*
 " *which it is thought more impossible to dis-*
 " *course clearly, and concerning which Men*
 " *more expect and pardon obscure Discourse,*
 " *than upon the Subjects of Liberty and Ne-*
 " *cessity: But this common Observation, (says*
 " *he,) is both a common and a learned Er-*
 " *ror. For, whoever employs his Thoughts*
 " *about — any Subject, ought to have some*
 " *Ideas to be the Object of his Thoughts:—*
 " *For where Ideas fail us in any matter, our*
 " *Thoughts must also fail us: And 'tis*
 " *plain, whenever we have Ideas, we are a-*
 " *ble to communicate them to Others by*
 " *Words.—When any Writer speaks obscure-*
 Pag. 8. " *ly,—why did he write before he had a*
 " *Meaning, or before he was able to express*
 " *to Others what he meant? Is it not un-*
 " *pardonable, for a Man to cant, who pre-*
 " *tends to Teach?*" All This, is very well
 said. Let us now see, how the Author
 Himself has observed his own Rules.

* Pag. 11; is * Thus stated by him; *Whether Man be*
 and running a *Free, or Necessary Agent.* And he is con-
 Title. fident

fident, that Men are † *Necessary Agents*; † *Pag. 31.*
 that *All* allow Mad Men, and Children, and
 Beasts, to be * *necessary Agents*; that some * *Pag. 53,*
Actions, are plainly ** *Actions that are* ** *Pag. 30.*
Necessary; that there can be no dispute, but
 Perception is a † *Necessary Action* of Man; † *Pag. 32.*
 and that Causes act on * *Necessary Agents*, * *Pag. 99.*
 to whom they are necessary Causes of *Action*. Now here I desire to know, *what*
Idea the word *Agent* or *Action* carries along
 with it, when joined with *Necessary*. Vul-
 garly indeed, in loose, figurative, and impro-
 per Speech, we call *Clocks* and *Watches*, *Ne-*
cessary Agents. But in truth and strictness
 of speaking, (which ought always to be care-
 fully preserved in Philosophical Debates,)
 a *Necessary Agent* or *Necessary Action* is a
Contradiction in Terms. For whatever *acts*
Necessarily, does not indeed *act at all*, but is
 only *acted upon*; is not at all an *Agent*, but
 a mere *Patient*; does not *move*, but is *moved*
 only. *Clocks* and *Watches*, are in no Sense
Agents; neither is their *Motion*, in any
 Sense, an *Action*. Nor is it merely, “ for *Pref. p. 3.*
 “ want of *Sensation* and *Intelligence*, that
 “ *Clocks* and *Watches* are subject to an ab-
 “ solute, *Physical*, and *Mechanical* *Necef-*
 “ *sity*”. For the *Pulsation of the Heart*,
 though joined with *Sensation*, is yet as *ne-*
cessary a *Motion*, as that of a *Clock*; and
 the One is no more an *Action* of the *Man*,
 than the other is of the *Clock*. Nor would
 a *Balance* indued with *Sensation* and *Intelli-*

gence, be any more an *Agent* when it felt itself moved by the *Weights*, than it is Now an *Agent without Perception*. A *necessary Agent* therefore, I say, whether *with* or *without Sensation*, is *No Agent* at all: But the *Terms* are *contradictory* to each other. To be an *Agent*, signifies, to have a *Power of beginning Motion*: And *Motion* cannot begin *necessarily*; because *Necessity of Motion*, supposes an *Efficiency Superiour* to, and irresistible by, the thing moved; and consequently the *Beginning of the Motion* cannot be in that which is moved necessarily, but in the superiour Cause, or in the *Efficiency of some Other Cause* still superiour to That, till at length we arrive at some *Free Agent*. Which *Free Agent*, may either (which is the case of *Men*,) have received the *Power of beginning Motion*, from the *Will* of a Superiour *Free Agent*: Or (which is the case of *God Almighty*,) he may be *Himself necessarily existent, necessarily all-knowing, necessarily all-powerful*; because *Existence, Knowledge, Power*, and the like, are not *Actions*; But he cannot be a *necessary Agent*, without an exprefs contradiction in the very *Terms*. All *Power of Acting*, essentially implies at the same time a *Power of not acting*: Otherwise 'tis not *Acting*, but barely a *being acted upon* by That *Power* (whatever it be) which Causes the *Action*. When therefore this Author talks much of *Necessary Agents* and *Necessary Actions*

Actions ; may not his own Question be very reasonably put to him, "*Why did he write* pag. 2. "*before he had a Meaning, or before he was able to express to Others what he meant ? Is it not unpardonable for a Man to Cant, who pretends to Teach*" ? Or if (as seems most probable,) his real Meaning is, that Man is not an *Agent* at all ; his Question still returns, *Why did he write, before he was Willing to express to Others what he meant ?*

Again : Does the Author really think that he expresses *clear Ideas* in *clear Words*, when he constantly confounds *Perception* (wherein the Mind is entirely *passive*,) with *Action* itself ? And by the word, *Will*, without Any Distinction, means sometimes the *Last Perception of the Understanding*, which is entirely *passive* ; and sometimes the *First exertion of the Self-moving Faculty*, which again is *Action* ? Thus he tells us, (Page 31,) "*There can be no Dispute, but Perception of Ideas is a necessary Action of Man :*" And yet, without all dispute, *Perception of Ideas* is *No Action* at all. Page 33, "*A Second Action of Man, is judging of Propositions :*" As if seeing a thing to be true or false, was an *Action*, or had any thing to do with the *Will*. Page 65, The *Physical power of doing*, what a wise Man will certainly chuse *not to do* ; or of *forbearing to do*, what yet a wise Man will not fail to *do* ; is compared with being "*Able to refuse our Assent to what is evidently*

“ *True to us :*” Which (as before,) is not
 an *Action*, but a *Perception*. Page 78, 79,
 81 and 82; By the same absurd *Confound-*
ing of what is *Active* with what is *Passive*,
 it is alleged, that, if Man was indued with
Liberty of Action, he would not be “ *necessa-*
 “ *rily determined to Assent to Truth only ;*” he
 would not “ *be necessarily determined in his*
 “ *Assent, by what seems a reason to him ;*” he
 would “ *be indifferent to Propositions, not-*
 “ *withstanding any reason for them ;*” he might
 “ *reject what appears True to him, and assent*
 “ *to what seems absurd to him ;*” he would
 have an “ *Indifference to receive Truth ;*”
 he would be “ *capable of Judging contrary*
 “ *to his Reason ;*” and would “ *not be ne-*
 “ *cessarily determined by the greatest Evi-*
 “ *dence, to assent to Truth.*” From page 36
 to 57, the words *Willing* and *Preferring*,
 are continually made use of in the most
 confused manner, to denote equally, and
 without Any Distinction, both the *Last Per-*
ception or *Judgment of the Understanding*
 which is entirely *Passive*, and also the
First Exertion of the Self-moving Power which
 is essentially *Active*. These Two Things,
 I say, the Author constantly confounds to-
 gether, as *One Individual*, by the ambiguous
 use of the words *Willing* and *Preferring*.
 Arguing, that because *Willing* and *Prefer-*
ring, so far as those Words signify the *last*
Perception or *Approbation of the Understanding*,
 are *Passive* and *Necessary* ; therefore *Will-*
 ing

ing and Preferring, when the same Words imply the *first Exertion of the Self-moving Power*, which is *essentially Active*, are necessary also : And because, when *Will* signifies the *actual exertion of the Self-moving Power*, a Man then indeed must necessarily do that which he *Wills*, (because it is not possible that a Man should *not do* a thing, when he is *supposed to do it*;) therefore, when the same word [*Will*] signifies nothing more than the *last Approbation of the Understanding*, it shall still be true that a Man must *Necessarily do* (using the word *Necessarily* in the *Physical* and proper Sense) what his *Understanding* approves. Than which Consequence, nothing can be more weak. For though the *Self-moving Power*, (which, if it is not *Free*, is a contradiction in Terms,) is an adequate Cause of Action; yet *Understanding* or *Judgment* or *Assent* or *Approbation* or *Liking*, or whatever Name you please to call it by, can no more possibly be the efficient Cause of Action, than *Rest* can be the Cause of Motion. Nothing can possibly be the Cause of an Effect more considerable than itself. Nothing that is *passive*, can possibly be the Cause of any thing that is *Active*. An occasion indeed, it may be; and Action may be consequent (tho' without any *Physical* connexion,) upon *Perception* or *Judgment*; nay, it may easily (if you please) be supposed to be *ALWAYS* consequent upon it, and yet that at the same time there be no manner of *Physical*

sical or necessary connexion between them. For instance : God's *performing* his *Promise*, is *A L W A T S* consequent upon his *making* it: Yet there is *no connexion* between them, as between *Cause* and *Effect*: For, not the *Promise* of God, but his *Active Power* is the alone *Physical* or efficient *Cause* of the *Performance*.

pag. 9.

" *When Authors, who in other respects are equal, treat of any Subjects further than they have clear and distinct Ideas ; they do and cannot but write to as little purpose, and take as absurd pains, as the most ignorant Authors do.*"

pag. 11.

Again : What is become of *clear and distinct Ideas*, when we are told of "*Actions being determined by the CAUSES preceding each Action?*" of Man's being "*Ever unavoidably determined in every point of time by the Circumstances he is in, and the CAUSES he is under, to do that one thing he does, and not possibly to do any other?*"

pag. 32.

" *This first necessary Action*", [viz. *Perception*, which is *No Action* at all,] being "*the*"

pag. 87.

" *Foundation and C A U S E of all the other intelligent Actions of Man?*" and, of "*Pleasure and Pain being CAUSES to determine Mens Wills.*" For, *what Idea* can any Man frame, how *Pleasure* or *Pain*, which are mere *passive Perceptions*; or how *Reasons*, *Motives* and *Arguments*, which are mere *abstract Notions*, can be the *physical, necessary, and efficient Cause* of *Action*? May not an *abstract Notion* as well *strike a Ball*, as be the *efficient*

Cause

Cause of Motion in a Man's Body? Occasions indeed they may be, and are, upon which That Substance in Man, wherein the Self-moving Principle resides, *freely exerts its Active Power*. But 'tis the *Self-moving Principle*, and not at all the *Reason or Motive*, which is the *physical or efficient CAUSE of Action*. When we say, in *vulgar Speech*, that *Motives or Reasons DETERMINE* a Man; 'tis nothing but a mere *Figure or Metaphor*. 'Tis the *Man*, that *freely determines himself to act*. *Reasons, or Perceptions of the Understanding*, can no more (properly and strictly speaking) *determine an Action*, than an *abstract Notion* can be a *Substance or Agent*, can *strike or move a piece of Matter*. Unless All that this Gentleman advances about *Reasons and Motives and Perceptions of the Understanding*, be mere * *Cant*; and his * *pag. 2.* true meaning be, that Man is indeed *No Agent* at all, but is moved *necessarily and mechanically* by mere *Impulses of subtle Matter*. And then the *Question* will still for ever return upon him, about the *Original Cause of Motion*; Which must either finally be resolved into a *First Mover*, in whom consequently there is *Liberty of Action*; or else into an *infinite and eternal Chain of Effects without Any Cause at all*: Which is an express contradiction, except *Motion* could be *necessarily-existent in its own Nature*; Which that it is not, is evident, because the *Idea of Rest* is no contradiction; and also because

cause there being no *Motion* without a particular *Determination* one certain way, and no one *Determination* being in nature more necessary than another, an essential and necessary *Tendency to Motion in all Determinations equally*, could never have produced any *Motion* at all.

Lastly : By *what clear and distinct Ideas* can any Man perceive, that an *Indifferency* as to *Power*, (that is, an *equal Physical Power* either of *acting* or of *forbearing to act*;) and an *Indifferency* as to *Inclination*, (that is, an *equal Approbation* or *Liking* of *one Thing* or of *the contrary*;) is *One and the same Thing*? And yet these Two, are constantly *confounded* through the whole Book : The Author always supposing, that if a Man is not determined as *necessarily and irresistibly*, as a *Weight* determines the *Motion* of a *Balance*; then he can in *no Degree* be influenced by, nor can have any *Regard* to, any *Motives* or *Reasons of Action* whatsoever, but must be *totally indifferent* to *All Actions* alike. Thus page 66, an “*Indifferency to good and evil*” is put as equivalent to a *Physical Possibility* of doing *what appears least eligible*; And a *Physical Possibility* of doing *what appears least eligible*, is represented as a *Necessity* of doing *what appears least eligible*; like “*Infants that cannot walk, left to go alone, with Liberty to fall*”. Page 72, 73, *Liberty* is represented as an “*arbitrary Faculty*, to
“ *abuse*

"chuse without Regard to the Qualities of
 "Objects; indifferent to all Objects, and
 "swayed by no Motives in the Choice of
 "Objects". Page 79, 80, "Indifferent to
 "any Objects, notwithstanding they seemed
 "good: — Indifference to Pleasure and
 "Pain, that is, Liberty to refuse the first,
 "and chuse the last". Page 87, 88, 'Tis
 argued, that "were Pain, as such, eligible,"
 [that is, POSSIBLE to be chosen, so the
 Word must be understood in this Place;]
 "and Pleasure, as such, avoidable; Rewards
 "and Punishments could be NO MOTIVES
 "to a Man". That unless "Pleasure and
 "Pain have a NECESSARY Effect on Men,
 "and it be IMPOSSIBLE for Men not, &c.
 "of what USE would be the Prospect of
 "Rewards — or Punishments"? And, "if
 "— all Men COULD prefer or will Punish-
 "ment considered as Pain, and reject Re-
 "wards considered as Pleasure, Men would
 "be under NO RESRAINT". Page 89,
 90, It is supposed to follow, if Man be not
 a Necessary Agent, that then he is not at all
 "affected with Pleasure and Pain", but is
 "indifferent to Pleasure and Pain", and
 "equally indifferent to Morality and Immo-
 "rality". The same absurd Supposition,
 is repeated again, page 96. And page 99,
 it is alleged, that "to represent Reasons to
 Men, — would be of no Use, if Men had
 Free-Wills, or their Wills were not moved
 by them". As if nothing could possi-
 bly

by be of *any* Weight, or of *any* Use with Men, that did not *Necessitate* them: And if a Person be not determined *irresistibly*, then he must be *totally indifferent* to *All Actions* alike, and can have *no* *Regard* to *Motives* or *Reasons of Action* at all. Of which *Consequence*, no Man can have a *clear* Idea; 'till it has first been *proved*, that *Self-Moving* or *Active Power*, is inconsistent with having *any* *Regard* to *Reasons of Acting*.

In the *Next* Place, I observe, that the Author endeavours to impose upon his Reader a *False Definition* of *Liberty*. "I con-
 *Pref. p.2. tend, says * he, for *Liberty*, as it signifies
 " a *Power* in *Man*, to do as he wills or
 " pleases ". And this, he elsewhere stiles
 †pag. 113. a † *Valuable Liberty*. Now in this Defini-
 ** See
 above, pag. 8 and 9. tion, besides the ** foremention'd Ambigu-
 ity of the Words, *wills* or *pleases*; it ought
 carefully to be remarked, that the word, *Do*,
 has no Signification. For his Meaning is
 not, that the Man *acts* or *does* any Thing:
 But the *Liberty*, or *Power* in *Man*, to do as
 he wills or pleases, is, with Him, exactly and
 only the same, as the *Liberty* or *Power* in a
Balance would be, to move as it wills or
pleases, supposing the *Balance* indued with
 such a *Sensation* or *Intelligence*, as enabled
 it to perceive which way the *Weights* turn-
 ed it, and to approve the Motion, so as to
 fancy that it moved itself, when indeed it

was

was only moved by the *Weights*. That this is his real Meaning, appears plainly from hence; that he makes the Difference between a *Man* and a *Clock*, to consist only in †† *Sensation and Intelligence*, not in any ^{†† Pref. pag. 3.} *Power of acting*. Whereas indeed the whole Essence of *Liberty*, consists in the *Power of acting*. *Action* and *Liberty*, are identical Ideas: And the True DEFINITION of a *Free-Being*, is, One that is indued with a Power of *acting* as well as of *being acted upon*.

This Mistake in the Notion of *Physical Liberty* and *Necessity*, led him also into the like Mistake in his Notion of *Moral Necessity*. *Moral Necessity*, in true and Philosophical Strictness, is not indeed any *Necessity* at all; but 'tis merely a *figurative Manner of Speaking*, which, like all Other *figurative Expressions*, has nothing at all of *Physical Reality* in it. When a Man says, he cannot POSSIBLY be deceived in relying on the Word of a Person of known Veracity; the Meaning is not, that That Other Person has no Power to deceive him, or that (with Regard to the *Physical Action*) it is not as *easy* for That Person to depart from his Promise, as to keep it; but that the Man has great Reason to depend on such a Person's Character, that he shall not be deceived by him. But now this Author makes * *Moral* * ^{* Pref. pag. 3.} *Necessity* and *Physical Necessity* to be exactly and Philosophically the same Thing: Only with

with this Distinction, that *Physical Necessity* in an *Unintelligent Subject*, is *Physical Necessity*; but that the same *Physical Necessity*, in an *Intelligent Subject*, is only *Moral Necessity*. When a *Stone falls*, or a *Clock* or *Watch moves*, it moves by a *Physical Necessity*: But when a *Man falls*; or when he is determined to do *Any Action*, which he is exactly under the same *Physical Necessity* of doing, (only with this Circumstance, that his Understanding *approves* or is *pleased with it*,) as he is of *falling* when he is thrown down a *Precipice*; this (it seems) is *Moral Necessity* only. In which Matter, the Author is guilty of a double Absurdity. *First*, in supposing *Reasons* or *Motives* (unless those Terms be mere * *Cant*,) to make the same *necessary Impulse* upon *Intelligent Subjects*, as *Matter in Motion* does upon *unintelligent Subjects*; which is supposing *Abstract Notions* to be *Substances*. And *Secondly*, in endeavouring to impose it upon his Reader as a thing taken for *granted*, that *Moral Necessity* and *Physical Necessity* do not differ intrinsically in their *own Nature*, but only with *Regard* to the † *Subject* they are applied to: When on the contrary he well knows, that, by *Moral Necessity*, consistent Writers never mean any thing more, than to express in a *figurative Manner* the *Certainty* of such an Event, as may in *Reason* be fully depended upon, though *literally* and in *Philosophical Strictness of Truth*, there

* *Page 8.*† *Pref. p. 3.*

there be *no Necessity at all* of the Event. Thus if God has *promised* that the World shall continue another Year, 'tis a very natural and obvious Manner of Expression, to say that the World *cannot possibly* come to an End This Year; and yet no reasonable Person is by that Manner of speaking led to imagine, that God has not at this moment the *very same physical Power* of destroying the World, as he will have at any time hereafter. And therefore 'tis with great unfairness, that this Author, at the Conclusion of his Book, having cited from *Dr Clarke* a Passage wherein such a *figurative* Expression occurs, makes from thence the following Inference: "*In this*, says * he, *Dr Clarke*" * Pag. 111. "*plainly allows the Necessity for which I have contended: For he assigns the same Causes of human Actions, that I have done; and extends the Necessity of humane Actions as far; when he asserts that a Man cannot, under those Causes, possibly do the the contrary to what he does.*" *Dr Clarke's* words were these: "A Man intirely free from all Pain of Body and Disorder of Mind, judges it unreasonable for him to hurt or destroy himself; and, being under no temptation or external Violence, he *cannot possibly* act contrary to this Judgment: Not because he wants a *natural or physical Power* so to do, but because it is absurd and mischievous and *Morally impossible*,——that with a perfect Knowledge of

“ what is best, and without Any temptation
 “ to evil, his Will should *determine itself* to
 “ *choose* to act foolishly and unreasonably.”

It was reasonable to expect, that these words
 [“ *Not because he wants a Natural or Phy-*
 “ *sical Power so to do*”,] had been suffi-
 ciently explicatory of the foregoing ones.
 And yet This ingenious Writer has found a
 way to put an absurd Interpretation even
 upon *These last Words* also. “ *As to a na-*

†Pag III.

“ *tural or physical Power in Man, to act*
 “ *contrary to That judgment ; this (says†he)*
 “ *—is so far from being inconsistent with the*
 “ *Doctrine of Necessity, that —’tis a Con-*
 “ *sequence of the Doctrine of Necessity :*
 “ *For if Man is necessarily determined by*
 “ *particular moral Causes, and cannot then*
 “ *possibly act contrary to what he does :*
 “ *he must , under OPPOSITE moral*
 “ *Causes, have a Power to do the contrary*”

That is to say : A Man’s having, under the
SAME moral Causes, (which is evidently the
 Sense of Dr Clarke’s words,) a Physical Pow-
 er to do the contray to what he does ; *mean-*
only his having, under the *OPPOSITE* moral
 Causes, a Physical Power to do the contra-
 ry to what he does.

This being premised ; I proceed now brief-
 ly to consider the *Six* Arguments, by which
 the Author undertakes to prove, that Man is
 (what by a plain *contradiction in Terms* he
 calls) a *Necessary Agent* ; and that there nei-
 ther is, nor can be, any such thing as *Liberty*

H

His *First* Argument is : That *Experience*, I.
 which the *Vulgar* urge in Proof of Liberty, ^{pag. 11, 12.}
 is not a Proof of it : That many celebrated ^{pag. 14.}—
Philosophers and *Theologers*, both antient and ^{19.}
 modern, have given *Definitions* of *Liberty*,
 that are consistent with *Fate* or *Necessity* :
 That some Great Patrons of Liberty, do, ^{pag. 19.}—
 by their *Concessions* in this matter, destroy ^{30.}
 all Arguments from Experience : That All ^{pag. 31.}—
 the Actions of Men may be ranked under ^{56.}
 the four Heads of *Perception*, *Judging*, *Willing*,
 and *Doing as we will* ; and that *Expe-*
rience does not prove *Any* of these to be *Free* :
 And lastly, that *Experience* not only does not ^{pag. 31, 52.}
 prove Liberty, but, on the contrary, *Men may* ^{109.}
see by Experience that they are *Necessary*
Agents ; 'Tis matter of *Experience*, that *Man*
is ever Determined in his Willing ; We *expe-*
rience perfect Necessity ; and they who think
Liberty a matter of Experience, yet allow that
the Will follows the Judgment of the Under-
standing, and that, when two Objects are pre-
sented to a Man's Choice, one whereof appears
better than the other, he cannot choose the
worst.

i. To the first part of This Argument, viz.
 that *Experience*, which the *Vulgar* urge in
 Proof of Liberty, is not a Proof of it : I
 answer ; that All our Actions do Now in
 experience *Seem* to us to be *Free*, exactly
 in the *Same Manner*, as they would do upon

supposition of our being really *Free Agents*: And consequently, though This alone does not indeed amount to a *strict Demonstration* of our being *Free*; yet it leaves on the other side of the Question nothing but a *bare Possibility* of our being so framed by the Author of Nature, as to be unavoidably deceived in this matter by every experience of every Action we perform. The case is exactly the same, as in that notable Question, *whether the World exists or no*. There is no *Demonstration* of it from Experience: There always remains a *bare Possibility*, that the Supreme Being may have so framed my Mind, as that I shall always necessarily be deceived in every one of my Perceptions as in a Dream, tho' possibly there be *No material World*, nor any other Creature whatsoever, existing besides my Self. Of This, I say, there always remains a *bare possibility*: And yet no Man in his Senses argues from thence, that *Experience* is *no Proof* to us of the *Existence of Things*.

Pag. 14, 19. 2. But many celebrated Philosophers and Theologers, both antient and modern, have given Definitions of Liberty, that are consistent with Fate and Necessity. I answer: Whether this be so, or no, is nothing to the purpose. The true definition of Liberty, is, a Power to Act; as I have just now shown, pag. 15. When This Gentleman can show, that Action, or the Power of Acting, is consistent with Fate or Necessity; then he will gain his Point.

3. But

3. But further; *Some of the greatest* ^{Pag. 19, -}
Patrons of Liberty, do, by their Concessions ^{30.}
in this matter, sufficiently destroy all Argu-
ments from Experience. I answer again: Whe-
 ther This also be so, or no, is nothing at all
 to the purpose. The Question is not, what
 any Man has or has not *conceded*, but
 what the *Truth of the Case* is.

4. To the Allegation, *all the Actions* ^{Pag. 31, -}
of Men may be ranked under the *four Heads* ^{56.}
of Perception, Judging, Willing, and Doing
as we will; and that *experience* does not
 prove *Any of these to be Free*: I answer:
First, As to the Perception of Idea's; this is
 not an *Action* at all, but a *mere Passive*
Faculty; And therefore all that the Author ^{Pag. 32.}
 here advances about its being a *Necessary*
Action, is an entire Absurdity. *Secondly, As* ^{Pag. 33, 34.}
to Judging of Propositions, that is, (as the
 Author here explains it,) *assenting* to what
 appears *true*, and *dissenting* from what ap-
 pears *false*; This also, like *feeling* what we
feel, or *bearing* what we *bear*, is not an *Ac-*
tion at all, but is merely *passive*; And is
 therefore absurdly called, *Another Action of*
Man. *Attention* indeed, or a Man's *chusing*
to fix his Thoughts on one Subject rather
 than another, is an *Action*; and therefore
 belongs not to *This Head*, but comes pro-
 perly under the *fourth Head*, of *Doing as*
we will: But *Assenting* to what appears *True*,
 or *Dissenting* from what appears *False*, are not
Actions. *Thirldy, As to Willing*; This ^{Pag. 36.}
 word ^{&c.}

Word (as I before observed) has a great Ambiguity in it, and signifies two distinct Things. Sometimes it signifies the *last Perception or Approbation of the Understanding*, and sometimes the *first Exertion of the Self-moving or Active Faculty*. It can only be in the former Sense of the Word, that this Author says, " *Willing or Preferring, is the same with Respect to Good and Evil, that Judging is with Respect to Truth or Falshood: It is JUDGING that one thing is upon the whole better than another, or not so bad as another* ". And it can only be in the latter Sense of the Word, that he says, " *This Power of the Man thus to order the Beginning or Forbearance, the Continuance or Ending of any Action, is called the Will; and the ACTUAL EXERCISE thereof, Wiling* ". Now these two things, tho' expressed by the same Word, are yet very different things, and have no Similitude the one to the other. The one is entirely passive, belonging to the Understanding only, and has nothing to do with the Question about Liberty; The other is truly active, and therefore comes not under this Head, but under the following fourth Head of *Doing as we will*. By confounding these two things together, the Author constantly amuses and perplexes his Reader: By distinguishing them carefully, the Difficulties he proposes, are all easily removed. Thus, to that Question

pag. 40. " *Whether we are at Liberty to will, or* "

pag. 37. " *Power of the Man thus to order the Beginning or Forbearance, the Continuance or Ending of any Action, is called the Will; and the ACTUAL EXERCISE thereof, Wiling* ". Now these two things, tho' expressed by the same Word, are yet very different things, and have no Similitude the one to the other. The one is entirely passive, belonging to the Understanding only, and has nothing to do with the Question about Liberty; The other is truly active, and therefore comes not under this Head, but under the following fourth Head of *Doing as we will*. By confounding these two things together, the Author constantly amuses and perplexes his Reader: By distinguishing them carefully, the Difficulties he proposes, are all easily removed. Thus, to that Question

pag. 37. " *Whether we are at Liberty to will, or* "

“ *not to will* ” : The true Answer is ; in the *former* Sense of that Word, we *are not* at Liberty ; in the *latter* Sense of it, we *are*. To the Question, “ *Whether we can suspend Willing, or no ;* ” (in which, the Learned and Judicious Mr. *Locke* was indeed much perplexed :) the Answer is the same ; that, in the *former* Sense of the Word *Willing*, we *cannot* suspend ; in the *latter*, we *can*. To the Question, “ *Whether we are at Liberty to Will or chuse one or the other of two or more Objects* ” : The Answer is still the same ; in the *former* Sense of the Word, we *are not* at Liberty ; in the *latter*, we *are*. Nor does it make any Alteration in this Case, whether the Objects proposed be *perfectly alike and indifferent*, or whether they be *unlike and different*. For if the *Understanding* judges them to be *indifferent*, it cannot help judging them to be *indifferent* ; and if it judges them to be *different*, it cannot help judging them to be *different* : And yet in either Case, the *Self-moving Faculty* retains fully a *Physical Power*, or *Liberty*, of *actually exerting itself* towards either of the *indifferent*, or either of the *different* Objects. Which *Liberty of acting*, with Regard to the *indifferent* Objects, is a *moral* as well as *Physical Liberty* : But with Regard to the *Different* Objects, 'tis joyned with *that Inclination*, which (by an usual *Figure of Speech*) is stiled *Moral Necessity* ; Which every rational Being does

pag. 38.

pag. 40.

pag. 44,
— 52.

pag. 31,
and 52.

so much the more constantly and regularly follow, as the Being is more rational and perfect; but which nevertheless is as far from intrenching in the least Degree upon *Literal and Physical Liberty*, as even a *perfect Indifferency itself*. This, I say, is plainly the true Answer to all the foregoing Questions: *Except* it be denied, that there is at all in Man any *Self moving Power*: Which shall be considered presently in its proper Place. *Fourthly* and lastly; as to that which This Gentleman calls the *Fourth* (but which is indeed the *Only*) *Action* of Man, *viz.* *DOING as we will*, or actually exerting the Self-moving Faculty: Of this I say, as before, that since in All Cases it does now by Experience *Seem* to us to be *free*, that is, *Seem* to us to be really a *Self-moving Power*, exactly in the *same Manner* as it *would* do upon *Supposition* of our being *actually Free Agents*; the *bare physical Possibility* of our being so framed by the Author of Nature, as to be unavoidably deceived in this Matter by every Experience of every Action we perform, is no more any just Ground to doubt the Truth of our Liberty, than the *bare natural Possibility* of our being all our life-time, as in a Dream, deceived in our Belief of the *Existence of the Material World*, is any just Ground to doubt of the Reality of its *Existence*. But this Author goes still further; and contends, not only that *Experience is no Proof of Liberty*, but

5. That

5. That, on the contrary, *Men may see by Experience, that they are necessary Agents*: pag. 31,
52, and
109.
That 'tis *Matter of Experience, that Man is ever determined in his Willing*: That we experience perfect *Necessity*: That if we *Will* any *Actions*, we find we *MUST* do those *Actions*, unless some external *Impediment* hinders us: That *Man is ever unavoidably determined in every Point of Time, by the Circumstances he is in, and CAUSES he is under, to do That One thing he does, and not Possibly to do any other*: And that *They who think Liberty a Matter of Experience, yet allow that the Will follows the Judgment of the Understanding, and that, when two Objects are presented to a Man's Choice, he CANNOT choose the worst*. To all which, I answer:

First; The Experience of a Man's ever doing what he judges reasonable to do, is not at all an Experience of his being under any *Necessity* so to do. For *Concomitancy* in this Case, is no Evidence at all of *Physical Connexion*. Upon Supposition of perfect Liberty, a reasonable Being would still constantly do what appeared reasonable it should do: And therefore its constantly doing so, is no Proof at all of its wanting Liberty or a *Physical Power of doing otherwise*: See above, page 9, 10.

But *Secondly*: Either Man has within himself a *Faculty or Principle of Self-Motion*, that is, a *Power of Beginning Motion*; or he has not.

If

If he *has* within himself a *Principle* or *Power* of *Self-Motion*; then (which is the *Essence* of *Liberty*,) That *active Substance*, in which the *Principle* of *Self-Motion* inheres, is it self the only proper, *Physical*, and immediate *CAUSE* of the *Motion* or *Action*: For, that any thing *extrinsick* to the *Agent*, should be the *Mover*, or *Physical Cause* of the *Self-Motion*, is a *Contradiction* in *Terms*. And if it be said, that *Reasons* or *Motives* are the *Causes* of *Action*; this can be true only in a *Figurative* Sense: For, to make *Reasons* or *Motives* the *Literal* and *Physical Cause* of *Motion* or *Action*, is supposing *abstract Notions* to be *Substances*. In like manner; if it be said, a Man *MUST* do those *Actions* which he *Wills*, and *CAN-NOT* do otherwise; this also must either be understood in a *figurative* Sense only, if by the word [*Will*] be meant merely the *approbation* of the *Understanding*: or else, if by the word [*Will*] be meant the *actual exertion* of the *Self-moving Power*, then the saying a Man *MUST* necessarily do those actions which he *Wills*, signifies nothing more than that it is not possible for a Man *not* to do a thing at the same time that he is *Supposed* to do it.

But now, on the other hand, if a Man *has not* within himself a *Principle* of *Self-motion*, or a *Power* of *Beginning Motion* then, being *No Agent* at all, (notwithstanding his *Perception* or *Intelligence*,) any more than

than a *Clock* or a *Watch* ; his *Motions* must all be wholly owing to the efficient Impulse of some extrinsick Cause, and the *Motions* of That to the Efficiency of some Other Cause ; and so on ; till either at length we arrive at some *Free Agent*, in whom is perfect *Liberty* ; or else we must go on *in infinitum* through an eternal Chain of dependent *Effects* without Any Cause at all ; Which is Absurd. See above, pag. 6 & 11.

The Author concludes this Argument, with observing that the Actions of *Children* and of *Beasts*, are *allowed*, by the Greatest Advocates of Liberty, to be *All necessary* : And thereupon asks, To what Age do Children continue *necessary* Agents, and When do they become *Free* ? I answer : If any Advocates of Liberty have allowed any such thing, it was very *weakly* done of them. The *Actions* of *Children*, and the *Actions* of every living *Creature*, are *all* of them *essentially Free*. The Mechanical and voluntary *Motions* of their Bodies, such as the *Pulsation* of the *Heart*, and the like, are indeed *all necessary* ; but they are *none* of them *Actions*. Every *Action*, every Motion arising from the *Self-moving Principle*, is *essentially free*. The *Difference*, is This only. In *Men*, this *Physical Liberty* is joined with a Sense or consciousness of *moral good* and *evil*, and is therefore *eminently* called *Liberty*. In *Beasts*, the same *Physical Liberty* or *Self-moving Power*, is wholly separate from a Sense or consciousness

ness or capacity of judging of *moral good* and *evil*; and is vulgarly called *Spontaneity*. In *Children*, the same *Physical Liberty* always is from the very Beginning; And in proportion as they increase in Age, and in capacity of Judging, they grow continually in Degree, not more *Free*, but more *Moral*, Agents.

- II. His *Second* Argument to prove Man a *Necessary Agent*, is, "because all his *Actions* have a Beginning: For whatever has a Beginning, must have a Cause; And every Cause, is a *Necessary Cause*." Again; "If Any *Action* whatsoever, can be done without a Cause; then *Effects* and *Causes* have no necessary relation, and by consequence we should not be necessarily determined in any case at all." The Fallacy of This Argument, lies in the words, *Necessary Cause*. 'Tis true, that *whatever has a Beginning, must have a Cause*. 'Tis true also, that *every Cause is a Necessary Cause*; that is, that every adequate efficient Cause, when it is supposed to operate, cannot but produce the Effect, of which it is at That time an adequate efficient Cause. But This is saying nothing more, than that any thing must needs be, when it is supposed that it is. Which is nothing to the Question about Liberty and Necessity. For the *Free Self-moving Power*, when it is supposed to exert itself, cannot

not but *produce that Motion or Action*, of which it is at that time the immediate efficient Cause. If I mistake not therefore, This Argument (in the True Intent and Meaning of the Author) is entirely founded upon the *Supposition*, that there neither is nor can be in Nature any such thing as a *Self-moving Power* at all. For, What else is the Meaning of his affirming, that, if Mans Actions are not *Necessary*, (that is, if they be not *physically and efficiently* caused by mechanical *Impulse of Matter*, which is making them to be mere Passions and not Actions at all; or by *Reasons and Motives*, which is making Reasons and Motives to be physical Agents or Substances;) then “ *a thing can have a Beginning, which* pag. 57.
“ *has no Cause;*” and, “ *Nothing can produce*
“ *Something?*” And when he tells us, that
“ *if Any Action whatsoever can be done With-* pag. 82.
“ *out a Cause, then Effects and Causes have*
“ *no necessary relation, and by consequence*
“ *we should not be necessarily determined in*
“ *Any case at all;*” And that, “ *if in the* pag. 82.
“ *most indifferent things there was not a*
“ *Cause of Choice, but a Choice could*
“ *be made without a Cause, then All Choices*
“ *might be made without a Cause, and we*
“ *should not be necessarily determined by the*
“ *greatest Evidence to Assent to Truth:*”
What is this, but *Supposing* that there is no such thing in nature as a *Self-moving Power*; and that if every *Action* and *Choice* be not as necessarily determined by something over which

which the Person has No Power, as our *Assent to Truth* (which is not at all an *Action* or a *Choice*) is necessarily determined by the appearing Evidence; then an *Action* is done absolutely *without any Cause* at all, and *Nothing can produce Something*? What is This, I say, but *Supposing* (instead of *proving*) that there neither is nor can possibly be, any such thing as *Self-moving* or *Active Power*, not in *Man* only, but even in no other *Being* whatsoever, no not even in *God himself*? For, the Argument is Universal: And the Conclusion also is Universal: “*Liberty*” (says he) *or a Power to act or not to act, to do this or another thing under the same Causes, is an Impossibility.*” The Argument therefore standing thus: I answer; (Though to the bare *Supposition*, that a *Self-moving* or *Active Power* is impossible, it were sufficient to oppose the contrary *Supposition*, that *such a Power* is not impossible: But I answer;) If there be no such thing in nature, as a *Self-moving* or *Active Power* or *Principle of beginning Motion*, (which is the Essence of *Liberty*;) then there is, in the Motions of the Universe, an infinite progression of *dependent Effects* without *any Cause* at all; an infinite progression of *passive Communications*, without *any Agent*, without *any thing Active* at all in Nature. Which is a manifest Contradiction; Unless *Motion* could be necessarily-existent: Which that it cannot possibly be, I have shown above, pag. 11, 12.

I can-

I cannot omit to take notice here by the way, that This Gentleman, in the passage^{pag. 59.} now cited, pleasantly stiles *Liberty*, not only an *Impossibility*, but *ATHEISTICAL* also; and contends that “*Liberty stands, and can only be grounded, on the absurd Principles of Epicurean Atheism.*” Mr. Leibnitz has done the same, in his Debate with Dr. Clarke, *Paper IV*, § 18; and *Paper V*, § 70. As if *Epicurus’s* supposing *Lifeless Atoms* to be moved by *Chance*, that is, by *Causes to Him unknown*; was the same thing as our ascribing either to *God* or *Man*, a *Principle or Power of Action* or of *beginning Motion*.

The Authors *Third* Argument against *Liberty*, is, that *Liberty* would not be a *Perfection*, but an *Imperfection*; and that to be a *Necessary Agent*, is an *Advantage* and a *Perfection*. And upon this Argument, he is very large. III.

He alleges, that Men would be *irrational Agents*, if they had a power of judging otherwise than according to appearing evidence; And that nothing “*can be more irrational and inconsistent, than to be able to refuse our Assent to what is evidently true to us, and to assent to what we see to be evidently false.*” All which, is very right. But this Argument is founded on a ridiculous definition of *Liberty*; as if a Power of

of *Acting*, implied also a Power of *Under-
standing*, as Men pleased.

pag. 66.

He supposes, that a Power [a *Physical Power*] of *choosing Evil as Evil*, implies being "*indifferent to Good and Evil*"; "*in-*

pag. 70, 72.

"*different to what causes pleasure or pain*"; "*indifferent to all Objects, and swayed by no Motives.*" Which is supposing, that whatever things are naturally *possible* for a Man to do, he has an *equal inclination* to do.

pag. 66.

He urges, that Liberty would be an Imperfection; because 'tis an Imperfection, to be *capable of choosing Misery*. And, by the same Argument, *Existence or Life*, in all Beings except God Almighty, is an Imperfection; because it subjects them to a Possibility of *Pain and Uneasiness*. Also *Virtue and Moral Goodness* will, for the same reason, be *imperfections*; because they *essentially* include a *Physical Power* of doing what is *Evil*. And even in the *Divine Nature itself* it would be a contradiction to suppose any *Moral perfection*, if God was under the same *physical necessity* of *doing all the good he does*, as he is of being *Omnipresent and Omniscient*.

pag. 67.

He argues, that "*a Power to will or chuse at the same time any one out of two or more indifferent things, would be no perfection*;"

pag. 68.

because, if the things were "*really indifferent*," there could be no "*Benefit*" arising from the Choice. This is the same Argument, by which Mr. *Leibnitz* proved that 'tis *impossible* for God ever to have created

any

any *two* pieces of Matter *exactly* alike, because, whatever *Situation* he placed them in, there could be no *Benefit* in their not being *transposed*.

He insists, that this "*arbitrary faculty*" pag. 72, 68,
 "would subject a Man to more wrong Choices," 73.

to "more Mistakes, than Man considered as a Necessary Being," [as a Necessary Agent, he means ;] "determined in his Choice." That is to say: The Power of Choosing, subjects a Man to make more wrong Choices, than if he had no Power of Choosing at all. Which is undoubtedly true. But if the Power of Choosing, be an imperfection; then Life and Activity, which essentially involve a Power of Choosing, are imperfections likewise; and a Stone is a more perfect Creature than a Man.

He asks, concerning the Perfection of God; "can any thing be perfect, that is not Necessarily perfect?" That is to say; If God be necessarily indued with perfect Liberty, then, by reason of That necessity, he cannot be indued with any Liberty at all.

Again: "Is it not a Perfection in God, Necessarily to Know all Truth, and to be necessarily Happy?" pag. 74; I answer: Yes; Because Knowledge and Happiness are neither of them Actions.

Again: Is it not also a Perfection in him, pag. 74.
 "to Will and Do A L W A Y S what is Best?" I answer; Yes: But not to Do so by a Physical Necessity; because That is not a Perfection, but a Contradiction in Terms. Whate-

ver is *physically necessary*, is *No Action*, neither in *God*, nor in any other Being.

pag. 74,
75.

76, 77.

He cites, with Great Satisfaction, certain *Weak Expressions* of Some very Learned and Eminent Men, concerning *all things* being in their own nature *indifferent*; and *becoming Good*, only by *God's Willing them*: Also concerning *infinite Perfection* excluding *Successive Thoughts* in *God*: And that *the Essence of God* is *one perfect Thought*: And that *tho' his Transient Acts* are done in a *Succession of Time*, yet *his Immanent Acts*, *his Knowledge* and *his Decrees*, are *One with his Essence*: And that *the Immanent Acts of God* being *supposed Free*, 'tis not easy to imagine how they should be *One with the divine Essence*, to which *Necessary Existence* does most certainly belong: And that if *the Immanent Acts of God* are necessary, then *the Transient* must be so likewise, as being the certain effects of *his Immanent Acts*: And that thus a *Chain of necessary Fate* must run through the whole *Order of things*; and *God himself* then is *no Free Being*. All which, and many other the like Citations, are nothing at all to the Purpose: Proving nothing, but only showing the pernicious Effects of *Scholastick Fargon*, which has sometimes imposed so far even upon very Learned and Good Men, as to make them think that *More Knowledge* is conveyed into the Mind by *words that have no Signification*, than by *mere inarticulate Sounds*.

pag. 78,
& 67.

He alleges, that *Saints in Heaven* cease to have *Liberty*; and that *Angels* are more perfect

fect than Men, because they are necessarily de-
termined to judge right in relation to Truth
and Falshood, and to chuse right in Relation
to Good and Evil. I answer: Neither Saints,
nor Angels, nor God himself, have in any
degree the less Liberty, upon account of the
Perfection of their Nature: Because, between
the physical Power of Action, and the Perfect-
ion of Judgment which is not Action, (which
two things This Author constantly confounds,)
there is no Connexion. God judges what is
right, and approves what is Good, by a phy-
sical necessity of Nature; in which physical
necessity, all notion of Action is necessarily
excluded: But Doing what is good, is
wholly owing to an Active Principle, in
which is essentially included the notion of
Liberty. Nor is it any thing to the pur-
pose, that, in a perfect Being, Doing right is
Always concomitant with, or consequent upon,
judging right; unless it was a Consequence
in the way of Physical connexion between Cause
and Effect: Which that it is not, and can-
not be, I have shown above, (pag. 9;) both
from the Nature of the thing, and from the
Instance of a Promise made by a Perfect Be-
ing, which is A L W A Y S followed with
Performance, and yet, being a mere Abstract,
cannot be itself a physical or immediate effi-
cient Cause of Action. A proper physical effi-
ciency might as well, and with as much truth,
be ascribed to Final Causes, which every one
knows to be nothing but Abstract Considera-
tions;

tions; as it is by This Author ascribed to *Moral Causes*, to *Reasons*, *Arguments*, *Judgment*, and the like.

pag. 78,
82.

All that follows upon This Head, is nothing but Repetitions of the same groundless Notions: That *Man* would be more perfect than he is, if he were indued with only *Passive and Perceptive Faculties*, without any proper *Active Powers*: That if *Man* was not a *Necessary Agent*, then he would be *INDIFFERENT* both to *Propositions* and *Objects*; he could be convinced upon no *Principles*; all *Reasonings* would be of no Use to him; he might reject what appears *True* to him, and assent to what appears *absurd* to him; and all his *Motions*, would depend upon *Chance*: Lastly, that if a *Man's Actions* were not *Necessary*, then there would not be a *Cause of Choice*, but a *Choice* could be made without a *Cause*, and *All Choices* could be made without a *Cause*, and we should not be necessarily determined by the greatest *Evidence* to Assent to *Truth*, &c. Than all which Assertions, nothing can be more absurd; They being all built entirely upon such Suppositions as these; that there is no Middle between *Necessity* and *Absolute Indifferency*; that *Perception of Truth*, is as much an *Action*, as *Doing what is right*; and that either *Necessity* or *Nothing*, is the efficient Cause of all *Choice* and *Action*: As if there could not possibly be any such thing in *Nature*, either in *Man* or in Any Other Being whatsoever, as a *Power* or *Principle* of beginning

ning Motion. Concerning which Matter, see above, pag. 30.

His *Fourth* Argument against *Liberty*, is, IV, that 'tis inconsistent with the *Divine Prescience*: For "if God foreknows the existence pag. 82, 84. " of any thing, as it depends on its own " Causes; That existence is no less necessary, " than if it was the Effect of his Decree: " For it no less implies a Contradiction, that " Causes should not produce their Effects; " than that an Event should not come to pass, " which is decreed by God." The Fallacy of which Argument, arises merely from a *Narrowness* or *Defect* in *Language*; The word *Prescience* being used to signify *Two* distinct Attributes or Perfections of the Divine Nature, which, though vulgarly called by the *Same* common Name, are yet as really and truly *different* from each other, as any *other two* Attributes whatsoever. This will appear by considering, that the only means we have of framing to our selves any true Notion of the Divine Perfections, is, by way of Analogy; inlarging in our Ideas, to an infinite Degree, every kind of Perfection which we observe in Finite Intelligent Beings. Now One sort of Perfection is, *Knowledge*. And *Knowledge*, in *Men*, signifies *Three* distinct Things. A Man who never was in *France*, *KNOWS* that there is such a Place as *Paris*: And here the word, *Knowledge*, means nothing but a firm *Belief*, founded upon un-

Ccc 3

questionable

questionable Evidence. A Man *KNOWS*, that the three Angles of a Triangle are equal to two right ones: Here the word, *Knowledge*, signifies *Science*, or the Perception of a Truth which is necessary in its own Nature. A Man *KNOWS*, that a very Covetous Person, whose Temper he is perfectly acquainted with, will certainly accept a very gainful Proposal when laid before him: And here the word, *Knowledge*, means nothing but *right and good Judging*. Now, to apply this to the present Argument: The *former* of these three sorts of *Knowledge*, can in no case, and in no degree whatsoever, have any place in *God*; because it *essentially* includes, in its very *Notion*, a *finiteness* or *limitation* of *Presence*. But the *Second* sort of *Knowledge*, the *Science* or Perception of necessary Truths, is, in *God*, just as much more *extensive* and *perfect* than in *Man*, as his *infinite nature* is more *perfect* than our *finite*. The *Third* sort of *Knowledge* also, the *Judging rightly concerning Truths* which depend not on *necessary* but on *Free Causes*, is, in *God*, just as much more *extensive* and more *infallible* than in *Man*, as the *Divine Nature* and *Understanding* is *Superiour* to *Ours*. Nevertheless, in *God*, these Two Perfections, each of them *infinite* in their *Degree*, are yet in their *Kind* as truly *distinct* from each other, as Our *narrow Science* of *Necessary Truths*, and our *fallible Judgment* of *Contingent Truths*, are things very different from each other. And *God's infallible Judgment concerning Contingent Truths*, does no more

alter

alter the nature of the things, and cause them to be *necessary*; than *Our judging right* at any time concerning a *contingent Truth*, makes it cease to be *contingent*; or than *Our Science of a present Truth*, is any Cause of its being either *True* or *Present*. Here therefore lies the Fallacy of our Author's Argument. Because from God's *foreknowing* the existence of things depending on a Chain of *necessary* Causes, (which is stiled *Prescience*;) it follows that the existence of the things must needs be *necessary*, it being a contradiction that *necessary* Causes should not produce their Effects: Therefore from God's *Judging infallibly* concerning things which depend *not on necessary* but *on free Causes*, (which Attribute, tho' totally of a different kind from the other, is yet usually stiled by the general name of *Prescience*;) he concludes that *these things* also, contrary to the *Supposition*, depend not upon *Free*, but upon *Necessary Causes*. Contrary, I say, to the *Supposition* in the Argument: For in the Argument drawn against *Liberty* from the *Divine Prescience*, it must not be first *Supposed* that things are *in their own Nature necessary*; but from the *Divine Prescience*, or power of *Judging infallibly* concerning *Free Events*, it must be proved that things *otherwise supposed free*, will thereby unavoidably become *necessary*. Which can no more be proved, than it can be proved that an Action *supposed at this present time to be free*, is yet (contrary to the *Supposition*)

on) at the same time *necessary*, because in all past time (whether *foreknown* or *not foreknown*) it could not (upon That very *Supposition* of its being *now freely done* ; I say, it could not) but be *future*. As has been at large explained in my Discourse concerning the *Being and Attributes of God*, Part I. pag. 106. Edit. 4th.

V. His *Fifth* Argument, is as follows. “ If
 Pag. 86. “ *Man was not a Necessary Agent, determined*
 “ *by Pleasure and Pain ; there would be no*
 “ *Foundation for Rewards and Punishments.*”
 pag. 96. Punishments “ *would be useless, unless Men*
 “ *were necessary Agents, and were determined*
 “ *by Pleasure and Pain ; because, if Men*
 “ *were Free or Indifferent to Pleasure and*
 “ *Pain, Pain could be no Motive to cause Men*
 “ *to observe the Law.*” This Argument *Supposes*, that whatsoever has in itself a *Power of Self-motion or Action*, cannot possibly have *Any Regard at all to Reasons or Motives of Action* : And that an *Indifferency* as to *Power*, (that is, an *equal physical Power* either of *acting* or of *forbearing to Act* ;) and an *Indifferency* as to *Inclination*, (that is, an *equal Approbation or Liking* of one Object or of the contrary ;) is *One and the same thing*. Than which, nothing can be more evidently absurd.

VI. His *Sixth* and Last Argument, is : “ If
 pag. 88. “ *Man was not a necessary Agent, determin-*
 “ *ed*

“ *ed by Pleasure and Pain ; he would have*
 “ *no Notion of Morality, or Motive to prac-*
 “ *tise it.*” If “ *he was Indifferent to plea-*
 “ *sure and pain, he would have no Rule to go*
 “ *by, and might never judge, will, and prac-*
 “ *tise Right.*” This Argument, is merely
 to make up the Number ; being the very same
 with the foregoing.

pag. 90.

The remaining part of his Book, is taken
 up in answering *Objections*. The Chief
 of which, is ; that *Punishments* would be
useless and unjust, if Men were not *Free A-*
gents. To which he answers ; that *Punish-*
ments, or the *Fears of Punishment*, have the
 same effect upon *intelligent necessary Agents*,
 to determine their Actions towards the *Pub-*
lick Good ; as *Weights* have upon a *Clock*, to
 make it go *right*. But how much soever
political Ends may sometimes possibly be ser-
 ved, by doing *great Injuries* to *Innocent Per-*
sons, such as *necessary Agents* cannot but be ;
 yet all *Personal Justice and Injustice*, all
Right and Wrong with regard to *particular*
Persons, is hereby totally taken away. And
 though *Weak and Frail Men* may fall under
Necessities of doing *great Hardships* to *parti-*
cular Persons, when there is no other *possible*
 way of securing the *Publick Safety* ; yet
God Almighty, we are sure, can never be re-
 duced to any such *Distress*, in order to sup-
 port his own Government. And therefore,
 if there be no such thing as *free Agents*,
 and

and consequently no such thing as *Personal Merit* or *Demerit*; God, to be sure, can never either *reward* or *punish* any Creature; (*Punishment*, at least, he can never possibly inflict;) because it must *necessarily* be *always unjust*. And thus this Author's Opinion absolutely takes away all *Foundation* of *Religion*.

But because answering Objections of his *own* raising, (if he were never so able to do it,) is nothing to the purpose: I shall briefly draw up for him the Sum of what has been said, into *One Objection*; To which if he can give a clear and distinct Answer, after the manner of one who sincerely seeks after the *Truth*, and not in a loose and ambiguous Use of Words of uncertain Signification; this whole Matter may then possibly deserve to be reconsidered.

Man, either *has* within himself a *Principle of Action*, properly speaking; that is, a *Self-moving Faculty*, a *Principle* or *Power of beginning Motion*: Or he has *not*.

If he *has* within himself such a *Principle*; then he is a *Free*, and not a *Necessary Agent*. For every *Necessary Agent* is *moved necessarily* by something else; and then *That which moves it*, not the *thing it self which is moved*, is the *True and Only Cause* of the Action. That any Other thing operating upon an Agent, should *efficiently* and *necessarily* produce *Self-motion* in That Agent; is a direct *Contradiction* in Terms,

If

If Man *has not* within himself a *Principle* or *Power* of *Self-motion*; then every *Motion* and *Action* of Man, is strictly and properly produced by the *efficiency* of some extrinſick *Cause*: Which *Cause*, must be either what we usually call the *Motive* or *Reason*, upon which a Man acts; or else it must be some insensible *Subtle Matter*, or some *other Being* or *Substance* making an Impression upon him.

If the *Reasons* or *Motives* upon which a Man acts, be the *immediate* and *efficient Cause* of the *Action*: then either *abstract Notions*, such as all *Reasons* and *Motives* are, have a *real Subsistence*, that is, are themselves *Substances*; or else *That which has it self no real Subsistence*, can put a Body into *Motion*: Either of which, is manifestly absurd.

If insensible *Subtle Matter*, or any *other Being* or *Substance*, continually making impression upon a Man, be the *immediate* and *efficient Cause* of his acting; then the *Motion* of *That Subtle Matter* or *Substance*, must be caused by some *Other Substance*, and the *Motion* of *That* by some *Other*, till at last we arrive at a *Free Agent*: And then *Liberty* is a *possible* thing: And then *Man* possibly may have *Liberty*: And if he may *possibly* have it, then *Experience* will prove that he *probably*, nay, that he *certainly* has it.

If we *Never* arrive at Any *Free Cause*: Then there is either *in infinitum* a Progression of *Motions* without any *Mover*, of *Effects* without any *Cause*, of things *acted* without any

any *Agent* ; Which is a manifest Contradiction : Or else *Motion* exists necessarily of itself.

If *Motion* exists necessarily of itself ; it must be either with a *Determination* every way, or one certain way : If with a *Determination* every way, This is no *Motion* at all : If with a *Determination* one certain way, then That *Determination* is either necessary, and consequently all other *Determinations* impossible ; which is contrary to experience ; Or else there must be a particular Reason of That determination, and so backwards in infinitum ; which comes to the forementioned Absurdity, of *Effects* existing without Any Cause.

I cannot make an End, without earnestly desiring this Author seriously to consider with himself, *What* it is that he has all this time been pleading for. For though it might be supposed possible, that, among *Necessary Agents*, a sort of a *Machine* of *Government* might be carried on, by such *Weights* and *Springs* of *Rewards* and *Punishments*, as *Clocks* and *Watches* (supposing them to feel what is done to them) are rewarded and punished withal ; yet in truth and reality, according to This Supposition, there is nothing intrinsically good or evil, there is nothing personally just or unjust, there is no Behaviour of rational Creatures in any degree acceptable or unacceptable to God Almighty. Consider the Consequence of This. Superstition and Bigottry

gottry, (things very *mechanical*, as well as very *mischievous* to Mankind,) can never be rooted out, but by persuading Men to look upon themselves as *rational* Creatures, and to implant in their Minds *rational* Notions of Religion: Religion there can be None, without a *Moral Difference of Things*: A *moral Difference of things* there cannot be, where there is no place for *Action*: And *Action* there can be none, without *Liberty*.

A *Free* and *Impartial* Inquiry after *Truth*, where-ever it is to be found, is indeed a *Noble* and most *Commendable* Disposition: A Disposition, which every Man ought himself to labour after, and to the utmost of his Power incourage in all Others: 'Tis the Great Foundation of all useful *Knowledge*, of all true *Virtue*, and of all sincere *Religion*. But when a Man in his *Searches* into the Nature of Things, finds his *Inquiries* leading him towards such Notions, as, if they should prove true, would manifestly subvert the very *Essences* of *Good* and *Evil*; The *Least* that a *Sober-minded* Man can in such a case possibly be supposed to owe to *God*, to *Virtue*, to the *Dignity* of a *rational nature*, is, that he ought to be in the highest degree *fearful* and *suspicious* of himself, least he be led away by *Any Prejudice*, least he be deceived by any *erroneous Argument*, least he suffer himself to be imposed upon by any *wrong Inclination*. Too great an *Assurance* in Arguments of This Nature,

Nature, (even though at present they seem-
ed to him to be *Demonstrations*;) *Rejoicing* in
the *Strength* of them, and taking *pleasure* in
the *carrying* of such a Cause; is what a *Good*
Mind can never be capable of. To *such* a
Person, the finding his *own* Arguments *un-*
answerable, would be the greatest *Grief*:
Triumphing in so *melancholly* a Field, would
be the highest *Dissatisfaction*; and nothing
could afford so *pleasing*, so *agreeable* a *dis-*
appointment, as to find his *own* Reasonings
shown to be *inconclusive*.

I shall suggest to this Author's Considera-
tion, only one thing further: That All
sincere Lovers of Truth and Liberty, of
free and impartial Examination, are under
the highest Obligations in reason and Con-
science, always to make use of That Free-
dom which we so greatly esteem and so
justly boast of, in such a manner only, as
may give no occasion to *Superstitious Men*
and *Lovers of Darkness*, to endeavour to
retrench That Liberty of inquiring after
Truth, upon which All *valuable Knowledge*
and all *true Religion* Essentially depends.



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